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P R E F A C E.

SEVERAL of the communications printed in this volume are of unusual length, and it includes therefore the record of only seven meetings, ending with the meeting of December, 1902. Among the more important communications are the exhaustive account of the Registers of Probate for the County of Suffolk, into which our valued and lamented associate, the late JOHN T. HASSAM, had put some of his best work; the very able paper by DANIEL H. CHAMBERLAIN on The Historical Conception of the United States Constitution and Union; the graphic description of New England life at the end of the eighteenth century, contained in the diary of John Quincy Adams; and the minute and thorough account of the life of Rev. John Higginson, by Judge BALDWIN, a Corresponding Member. Much interest attaches also to the letters of James Parker, Richard Lechmere, and Amos Binney; to the extracts from Mr. COOLIDGE's Autobiography; to the account of religious matters on the Piscataqua, by Rev. Dr. DE NORMANDIE; to Mr. FORD's paper on "Moses his Judicials"; and to Mr. NOBLE's paper on Suicide in Massachusetts.

Appropriate tributes to five Resident Members, JAMES B. THAYER, URIEL H. CROCKER, GEORGE B. CHASE, CHARLES G. LORING, and HORACE GRAY, and to one Honorary Member, SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER, are contained in the volume; and also one Memoir, that of Hon. Lincoln F. Brigham, by SOLOMON LINCOLN.

Special mention should be made here of the excellent work of Miss J. C. Watts (Radcliffe, 1897) in annotating the Diary of J. Q. Adams. Nearly all of the notes were prepared by her, and by her unwearied perseverance she has left almost nothing to be desired as to a knowledge of the various persons mentioned in the text, some of whom left no descendants, and have passed entirely out of memory.

The frontispiece to the volume is a photogravure from a portrait of J. Q. Adams, painted in London by J. S. Copley, in the spring of 1796, and sent by the artist in the early part of the following year as a present to John Adams and his wife. The original, which belongs to C. F. Adams, President of this Society, is now on deposit in the Museum of Fine Arts. The fac-simile of Mr. Adams's signature is from a letter written in July, 1796, to his brother-in-law, T. B. Johnson.

For the Committee,

CHARLES C. SMITH.

BOSTON, May 16, 1903.